Watershed Projects for Rajasthan

394. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to refer to the Starred Question 660 given in Rajya Sabha on 7th May, 2003 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of 1050 watershed projects and 919 special projects sanctioned for Rajasthan during the last three years, only 245 watershed projects and 264 special projects were sanctioned for the year 2001-2002 as compared to 388 watershed projects and 293 special projects that were sanctioned for the year 2000-2001;

(b) if so, the reasons for the shortfall for the year 2001-2002;

(c) whether there was any hindrance in the implementation of shelterbelt plantations and afforestation in Rajasthan due to severe drought conditions prevailing there; and

(d) if for the action contemplated in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The reasons for shortfall in the number of projects sanctioned in 2001 -2002 was due to increased liability in respect of on going projects on account of upward revision of project cost, from Rs. 25.00 lakhs in the case of Rajasthan, to Rs. 30.00 lakhs per project with effect from 1.4.2000. It is evident from the details of funds released during the last three years, given in reply to Starred Question No. 660 in Rajya Sabha, that inspite of reduction in the number of new projects, an amount of Rs. 8164.26 lakhs was released to Rajasthan in 2001-2002 as against Rs. 7853.78 lakhs in 2000-2001.

(c) and (d) No report regarding any hindrance in the implementation of shelterbelt plantations and afforestation due to severe drought conditions has been received so far from Rajasthan Government.

Job opportunities for educated youths of Assam

395. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state: